



NEWS RELEASE

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APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR GUARANTEED RURAL RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAM FUNDS

MORGANTOWN, WV - February 9, 2006—USDA Rural Development is accepting applications through the Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed loan program (Section 538). The program is provided to increase the supply of affordable rental housing through the use of loan guarantees, which are provided by Rural Development in partnership with private lenders and public agencies.

West Virginia State Director Robert M. Steptoe, III, stated, “This funding gives us the opportunity to provide more affordable housing that is decent, safe, sanitary, and competitive in the market.”

“This program is an excellent way for eligible borrowers to develop new rental housing, or acquire and rehabilitate existing multi-family housing,” said Rural Development Housing Administrator Russell Davis. “Starting this year, funds are also available to repair and rehabilitate housing complexes constructed under our multi-family (Section 515) housing program.”

To be eligible for funding under the program, the properties must have repair and rehabilitation costs totaling at least \$6,500 per unit. Eligible uses for loan proceeds also include construction of new units, land improvements, construction of office and maintenance buildings, community and recreational facilities, parking, landscaping, fencing and appliance purchases. Eligible housing types include family, senior and farm labor housing properties. Occupants must be members of very low, low or moderate income households; or elderly, handicapped and disabled persons with incomes not in excess of 115% of the area median income.

Eligible applicants for loan funds include U.S. citizens, aliens legally admitted for permanent residence, nonprofit organizations including local governments, community development groups and Indian tribes, or for-profit corporations. Rural areas with populations of up to 20,000 are eligible. Funding in the amount of \$99 million has been allocated to provide guarantees. USDA Rural Development will accept responses until all funds are expended. A notice will be placed in the Federal Register when all funds are committed for FY 2006.

Complete details appeared in the January 27th edition of the Federal Register. For more information, or to apply, call any USDA Rural Development state office or go to this web site: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/mfh/brief_mfh_grrh.htm.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$63 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Over 1.1 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments.

Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its rural housing programs, rural business programs, and rural utilities programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

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